

MINUTES
WOODSTOCK CITY COUNCIL

August 3, 2021
City Council Chambers

A regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council was called to order at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, August 3, 2021, by Mayor Michael Turner in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall. He explained the Consent Calendar process and invited public participation and noted, as is the City's policy, this evening's meeting is being live streamed with a recording archived should members of the public wish to view it in the future.

City Clerk Smiley confirmed that the agenda before the Council was a true and correct copy of the published agenda.

A roll call was taken.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Darrin Flynn, Lisa Lohmeyer, Tom Nierman, Wendy Piersall, Bob Seegers, Jr., Gordon Tebo, and Mayor Michael Turner.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Roscoe Stelford, City Attorney Ruth Schlossberg, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Paul Christensen, Public Works Director Christina Betz, Economic Development Director Garrett Anderson, Human Resources Director Debbie Schober, Grants/Communications Manager Terry Willcockson, and City Clerk Cindy Smiley.

OTHERS PRESENT: Lora Wasinger, Senior Director, Dorr Township.

III. FLOOR DISCUSSION

A. Public Comments

Dr. Lawrence Zidek stated his office is located 203 N. Throop Street, across the street from the Chop Suey Hut. He stated on July 22, his mother, who works for him, was hit by a 17-year-old bicyclist while exiting his office. He stated that he has spoken with other businesspeople on the Square who have stated there is a problem with skaters, skate boarders, and bicyclists in the area. Dr. Zidek stated the boy told him he could not see down Throop Street because of the parked cars, so he rode on the sidewalk. He provided photos which showed cars parked blocking the view of traffic. Stating he knows there are regulations per the Americans with Disabilities Act, he asked Council to look into possibly changing the parking configuration in this area.

Mayor Turner stated he was sorry about Dr. Zidek's mother and asked him to provide his materials to Mr. Stelford. He confirmed with Mr. Stelford there are ordinances addressing the activities described by Dr. Zidek.

Dr. Zidek also noted a raised B-Box in the area which also causes a problem opening if it had been flush perhaps this would not have happened.

Mayor Turner stated if moving the parking would provide a better sight line, the City will look into it. He asked Mr. Stelford to look into this and to remind the Police Department to keep the sidewalks safe.

C. Council Comments

In a follow-up to the last meeting at which Mr. Christensen presented the Quarterly Financial Reports, Councilman Seegers stated he was pleased to see an easy-to-read article on the front page of the City's website explaining real estate taxes in an easy-to-understand format. He suggested simplifying the financial reports and putting them on the web page also. He opined this is something the City and Staff should be proud of especially in light of the COVID-19 year stating it would be great for the public to see.

Mayor Turner stated this is a very interesting idea noting too often the work of Staff does not get marketed to the public. He opined it would be good to make the public aware of things such as a simplified financial report and information on property taxes. He stated the trend on property taxes that the City has taken over the last several years has been amazing and should be communicated to the public.

Councilman Seegers opined as the Council will be asking the residents for more, it would be a good idea if they could see the achievements the City has made and the trend on property taxes it has taken over the last several years.

A brief discussion followed of how best to communicate these things to the public. Mayor Turner opined the Enhanced Pavement Plan would be a good place to start. Councilman Seegers opined this may also help draw developer interest to the community.

Mayor Turner welcomed Lora Wasinger, the new director of the Senior Community Center. Ms. Wasinger introduced herself and provided information on her experience noting her deep feelings for the senior community. She stated she was very excited about this opportunity because Woodstock has received an Age-Friendly grant. Noting it will be a great thing, she asked for help getting the word out about the center.

Mayor Turner recognized the visit by the Mayor and other dignitaries from Zacatecas, Woodstock's Sister City. He thanked all involved with coordinating this, including Staff, Mayor Emeritus Brian Sager and Jose and Maggie Rivera.

He provided information on the visit, stating it was a fantastic connection between the cities. He stated he will be traveling to Zacatecas on September 15-16 for the new Mayor's installation, noting this would not be at the City's expense, and invited anyone else who would like to go to do so. He noted he and Roscoe intend to go back to Zacatecas in March at the invitation of the Mayor.

Mayor Turner recognized Opera House Director Daniel Campbell and Grant Writer Terry Willcockson for their efforts in securing a \$175,000 grant for the facility.

Mayor Turner thanked the Chamber for its work on the Tacos and Tequila and Rockstock events noting they were great summer events and very well attended. He thanked City Staff and also the volunteers which included members of Staff as well.

Mayor Turner thanked Ms. Betz and Supervisor Anne George for a tour of the Northside Treatment Plant. He stated as a result of what he learned on the tour, he has asked Mr. Stelford or Ms. Betz to develop a public service announcement highlighting how some specific changes by the behavior of residents could save the City thousands of dollars.

In response to a question from Councilman Seegers, Ms. Betz stated the grinders are doing their job, but are being worn out prematurely by the “flushable” wipes that are being put into the system. She noted the two most problematic items are flushable wipes and plastic bags. Mayor Turner stated this is the problem that is causing the unnecessary expenditure of funds. He noted the message about plastic bags could be valuable, as the single-use bag fee has been reinstituted.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by D. Flynn, second by W. Piersall, to approve the Consent Agenda.

In response to a question from Mayor Turner, the following item was removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of the Council or the Public:

- Item D-9 – Enhanced Streets Program by Mayor Turner

In response to a question from Mayor Turner, the following comments or questions were forthcoming from the Council or the Public regarding items remaining on the Consent Agenda:

Item – Approval of City Council Meeting

Councilwoman Piersall noted she should have been recorded as Absent rather than an Abstention in the Adjournment vote on the final page of the minutes.

Item – Minutes and Reports

Councilwoman Lohmeyer thanked Mr. Stelford for the prompt transmittal of the Plan Commission Minutes. She requested a quicker turnaround for the Economic Development Commission meeting minutes.

Item D-1 – Ordinance – Liquor License Code Amendments – Video Gaming

Councilman Nierman opined the intent of the City’s gaming licenses is to aid the restaurants stating he does not want to see more gaming establishments that have food just so they can get a video gaming license.

Stating he could not find the locations of the prospective licensees on Google maps, Councilman Seegers asked if they have previously come before Council with their business plans.

Mr. Stelford explained the process noting in the initial stage the applicant meets with the Mayor. He noted prior to recent Council action, the applicant had to come before the Council for a waiver to apply. Mr. Stelford stated the applicants in question may have been approved some time ago, but licenses were not available putting them on a waiting list which is why they are before the Council this evening.

Mayor Turner stated the businesses are not yet in their locations. Mr. Stelford provided information on where they will be located noting valid leases are in place on both properties as required.

In response to a question from Councilman Seegers, Mr. Stelford stated the City does not have to issue licenses in order of application stating it is solely at the discretion of the Council as to whom and whether a license is issued. He stated these two applicants were on the list and were told by Council if licenses became available they would be considered. He noted other applicants have inquired.

Mayor Turner stated the business in question have not come before this body noting they were before the previous Council who approved them should licenses become available.

Councilman Tebo noted an establishment must do 40% of its business in food to obtain a license. Mayor Turner confirmed this was the case for certain licenses. A discussion followed of how this is monitored with Mr. Stelford confirming they must provide financial statements. He stated previously, if a business did not show 40% food, they were put on notice, counseled by the Mayor and a plan developed.

Mayor Turner affirmed the Consent Agenda to include items A through D-8 as follows:

A. APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

July 20, 2021 City Council Minutes (as amended)

B. WARRANTS: 3964 3965

C. MINUTES AND REPORTS:

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| Cultural and Social Awareness Commission Minutes | June 7, 2021 |
| Economic Development Commission Minutes | March 4, 2021 |
| Human Resources Department Monthly Report | June 2021 |
| Library Board of Trustees Minutes and Director Report | June 10, 2021 |
| Plan Commission Minutes | July 15, 2021 |
| Police Department Monthly Report | June 2021 |

D. MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 184

1. Ordinance – Liquor License Code Amendments – Video Gaming

Approval of Ordinance 21-O-42, identified as Document 1, *An Ordinance Amending Title 3, Business and License Regulations, Chapter 3, Liquor Control of the Woodstock City Code* increasing the number of video gaming licenses from 25 to 27 and issuing said licenses to Lucky Café, 460 S. Eastwood Drive and Mariscos El Poka, 84-88 N. Eastwood Drive.

2. Award of Contract – Emricson Park Field Fence Replacement – Authorization to award a contract for fence replacement services to the lowest responsible bidder, Northern Illinois Fence, Cortland, IL, in the amount not to exceed \$54,780.

3. Award of Contract – Sidewalk Replacement 2021 – Authorization to award a contract for the FY21/22 sidewalk replacement program to the lowest responsible bidder, Globe Construction Co. Inc., Addison, IL, in accordance with the unit prices as submitted and for an amount not to exceed \$60,000.

4. Award of Contract – Skip Patching 2021 – Authorization to award a contract for FY21/22 pavement skip patching to the lowest responsible bidder, Schroeder Asphalt Services, Inc., Huntley, IL in accordance with the unit prices submitted and for an amount not to exceed \$51,000.

5. **Award of Contract – Tuckpointing – Seminary Ave Water Treatment Plant -** Authorization to award a contract for the tuckpointing of the Seminary Avenue Groundwater Storage Reservoir to Olsen Tuckpointing Company, Barrington, IL, for a total cost not to exceed \$89,450.
6. **Intergovernmental Agreement – District 200 School Resource Officer –** Authorization for the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the FY21/22 Police/High School Liaison Agreement.
7. **Professional Services – UP Railroad Water Main Replacement Project –** Approval to contract with WBK Engineering to provide professional design services for the Water Main Replacement & Arch Culvert Repair Project (UPRR) at a total cost not to exceed \$92,288.
8. **Ordinance – Incentive Agreement Amendment – Kunes Country –** Approval of Ordinance 21-O-43, identified as Document 3, *An Ordinance Amending an Incentive Agreement Between the City of Woodstock and Kunes Country of Woodstock*, subject to final review and approval by the City Attorney's Office.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: D. Flynn, L. Lohmeyer, T. Nierman, W. Piersall, B. Seegers, G. Tebo, and Mayor M. Turner. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion carried.

Item D-9 – Enhanced Street Maintenance Program

Noting this Council and the prior Council have had extensive discussions concerning the options regarding the strategy for the Enhanced Streets Program on the agenda this evening, Mayor Turner stated unless Council objects, there is no need to review the need. Noting the concepts have been under consideration for two years, he stated the Program is now before Council for specific action. He opined Council is now at the decision point as to whether it is ready to approve and move forward with the second year of this program. Mayor Turner stated if it is the consensus of the Council that the City is ready to proceed, the question is which option.

Mayor Turner then talked about the variations in the options, including in property tax required and the resultant PCI with each. He stated the most important considerations for him balance the PCI impact with spending and debt issuance, with slightly lower consideration being given to how long it takes to improve the roads. He stated he leans toward the options which put the City in the 70s PCI range, and is particularly favoring Option D which provides a PCI in the 70s with a lower property tax.

Mayor Turner asked for comments from Staff.

Mr. Stelford talked about the information contained in the two attachments provided in the packet. He provided additional information on funding for the various options, noting even the options which show \$0 spending in some years still will require funds, explaining this further. He stated work will not be stopped in 2026 and all roads will not be completed by 2031. He also stated the community cannot afford to have 100 PCI roads, opining the public will have to be educated that an average PCI rating of 70 is actually very good.

Ms. Betz stated the recommendation throughout all models is to go with the \$12 million in spending for roads for next year, because that has already been designed with very little work left to be done before going out for construction as soon as possible in 2022. In response to a question from Mayor Turner, Ms. Betz confirmed her recommendation is identified within Attachment A-1, which would move forward with \$12 million for next year no matter the option chosen.

In response to a question from Councilman Seegers, Mr. Stelford stated if Council chooses Option E, debt will be issued every year for 10 years. He stated with Options C & D, a significant amount of money will be infused over five years. He stated this will be closely monitored, noting in the current economy money is cheap, but there are reasons to believe costs will increase. He stated that is one reason Staff favors spending the \$12 million next year.

Mr. Stelford noted City Engineer Chris Tiedt and Ryan Livingston from HLR are on the line attending remotely should Council have any questions for them.

Mr. Christensen noted issuing debt each year is expensive, stating the fewer times the City has to go out to the market the better, so a faster approach is the better approach. He stated this is one of the factors that will be monitored by Staff, opining it might even be issued faster than identified.

In response to a question from Councilman Seegers, Mr. Christensen stated he favors Option D.

Noting for her one of the biggest factors is the remaining future liability, Councilwoman Piersall stated one of the hesitations against Options C or D is concern about debt load. In response to a question from Councilwoman Piersall, Mr. Christensen stated the debt load being considered will not deter the market. He noted the City's bond rating may go down, but opined as the City is a highly-rated entity, it will still be highly-rated, even if it is one or two categories less. Councilwoman Piersall stated when the consideration of the future remaining liability is added, Options C & D are the most fiscally conservative. She expressed her support for Option D.

Councilman Flynn expressed his support for Option D. In response to a question from Councilman Flynn, Mr. Stelford confirmed that when the bond is paid off, the associated property tax will drop off the tax bill.

Councilwoman Lohmeyer stated every time Council discusses this issue, it becomes clearer to her that Option D is the choice, opining any other approach would be letting people down.

Councilman Tebo stated the City must make people understand exactly what this means including how long the increase will stay on their property tax bills. He also suggested showing people pictures of what a 70 PCI street looks like and make sure the City is doing this intensely over the next four years. He stated the City must make this tax increase mean something the residents can see. Councilman Tebo expressed support of Option D, stating that he likes that the future liability is less.

Discussion ensued of how to communicate this to the residents. Councilwoman Lohmeyer suggested providing mock-ups of what future tax bills will look like so that people understand. Mayor Turner asked Mr. Stelford to have Staff work on a marketing plan that is both initial and sustained, including showing how much was done with the \$12 million and how much the tax bill will go up, noting the entire ten-year plan less than \$20 per month for a \$200,000 home. He asked

to make sure people know where their money is going. Mayor Turner opined the majority of people would agree this is a reasonable way to pay for this, especially in light of what the City has done over the last 10 years, foregoing the PTELL and saving the taxpayers money.

Noting the biggest complaint he hears from residents is the condition of the roads, Councilman Seegers stated the only thing he does not like about Option D is the fact that the increase varies year to year, which may not be understood by the residents. Mr. Christensen opined this could be smoothed out. Councilman Seegers expressed support of Option D with smoothing out the increase. Mayor Turner noted Staff must have flexibility so they are able to adjust as they deal with the bond market. Councilman Seegers stated he supports letting Staff use their discretion.

Councilman Flynn opined the public seems to think the City focuses on the Square and asked Ms. Betz to make sure a cross section of streets are done, with a focus on the entire community. Ms. Betz stated the City does have a selection of streets that was used to develop the models. Discussion of how the streets are chosen ensued with Ms. Betz describing some of the factors that go into this. Councilman Seegers advocated for giving priority to the streets that come into the heart of the community. Ms. Betz discussed some of the streets under consideration.

Additional discussion ensued of communication with the residents. Councilman Tebo opined many times the public does not know where the City gets its revenue, suggesting this should be explained to them also. Mayor Turner suggested using this project as a test for communicating in a non-governmental manner, making it simple enough for everyone to understand. Councilman Seegers suggested why certain roads are being done sooner versus later should also be explained, citing the example of a street which needs sewer infrastructure work, so it may be delayed before it can be repaired.

Ms. Betz stated all of these things and others were taken into consideration when running the models presented, noting through 2022 to 2031 there are all types of rehab included and opining it is a very complicated plan. She noted the data will be updated and the plan revised. Mayor Turner stated Council would like to see a short version of this when completed, asking that Council continue to be informed on what is happening in small chunks.

In response to a question from Mayor Turner concerning whether this plan takes into account the street design upgrade the City put in place three or four years ago, Mr. Stelford stated it is based on the City's historic street design, but will be discussed at the engineering level. He stated if it would have significant impact on cost, that will have to come back to Council, noting the engineers are researching this now.

Motion by D. Flynn, second by G. Tebo, to authorize Staff to move forward with the Enhanced Street Maintenance Program in FY22/23, with expenditure of up to \$12,080,000 for street resurfacing and restructuring, and direction to the City Administration to move forward with associated financing requirements including debt issuance, public hearing(s) and associated property tax levies, and, additionally, Council directs Staff to pursue all steps necessary for Option D.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Flynn, Lohmeyer, Nierman, Piersall, Seegers, Tebo, and Mayor Turner. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Motion carried.

Mayor Turner gave kudos to the prior Mayor and City Council for getting the City to this point to take substantial action to better the community at the request of the Public and thanked Staff for their efforts in support of this project.

V. DISCUSSION

1. Reorganization of the City of Woodstock's Management Structure – Discussion of the reorganization of the City's management structure with the addition of up to three Executive Directors, with two being funding in FY21/22.

Mayor Turner stated this is a discussion of the proposed restructuring and reorganization of the management structure of the City which has been discussed on two previous occasions with the intent to determine if there is a consensus of a direction in which to move forward.

Noting it was his opinion from previous discussions that a level of interest in Option 1 has been established, he stated at the suggestion of Staff and the request of some members of the Council, Staff has created some alternatives for discussion.

Mayor Turner stated his intent in bringing this idea forward was exclusively to seek an opportunity to improve the organization, noting it was not brought forward to judge the effectiveness of Staff. He stated it is not about saying existing Staff or things they are doing are poor or bad, but rather about maximizing potential.

Mayor Turner noted the current structure at the City Manager and Director level has been in place for many years, opining he does not know of many organizations of this size that have the exact same structure that it had 20 years ago. He opined what is being discussed provides an opportunity to evolve roles and opportunities in the City. He stated the yardstick for him is not only other governmental organizations, but rather is Council's belief in Staff's and the City's potential. He opined the question is as the City moves into the post-COVID-19 era and the resultant opportunities, can the City be better than it currently is, stating his belief that it can. He stated he does not want to be good enough, but wishes to go up to another level. Mayor Turner stated this is a great City with a great City Staff, opining things still can be done to make it better.

Mayor Turner stated the purpose of this discussion is to determine if this Council can arrive at a majority approach to make an organizational structure change.

Mayor Turner expressed his belief that areas of improvement remain that can be addressed, talking about some of these including being agents of change in how the City conducts the business of the City government. He stated he would like Council to come to a consensus on a strategically higher level as to how to evolve City with the purpose of maximizing its potential.

Councilman Flynn noted in looking at the advantages and disadvantages identified in the staff report, it is interesting to note many of the advantages are also listed as possible disadvantages, opining this is culture. He further opined no matter what decision is made, it is vital that the items listed as disadvantages are addressed, which has to be a cultural directive.

Councilman Flynn stated from his experience it is interesting to note when you add this next layer, the communication becomes much more effective because it takes a lot of weight off people who

have a great many people reporting to them, explaining this further and stating it allows a leader to be more in touch. He encouraged everyone to embrace this proposed structure, noting people feel they are being heard.

Councilwoman Lohmeyer stated she is very positive about this reorganization, stating she likes the coupling of the various departments that work together. She opined sometimes it is hard for a City Manager who oversees everything to make connections with all departments all the time. She opined the proposal would add another layer, which would make it a more efficient and proactive. She stated she is open to the first two options, stating she does not favor the option which only reduces the direct reports to 11.

While expressing agreement that some things should be taken off the City Manager, Councilman Nierman expressed concern with hiring two individuals at a cost of \$400,000. He stated he is leaning toward Option 2, opining this is more cost effective and can always be looked at two years down the road, if changes are needed. He stated this is especially concerning to him when also looking at the Enhanced Streets Program previously discussed.

Councilman Seegers opined this is not to take things off Mr. Stelford, but rather to allow him to use his skill set. He stated he also is leaning toward Option 2 with one Executive Director for the same reason expressed by Councilman Nierman. Stating his belief this is a cost issue, Councilman Seegers stated if the City grows or the new structure proves it is good, the second Executive Director could be hired.

Noting he has been through this process, Councilman Flynn opined if this goes part way it will fail because there will not be enough of a change to change the culture. He stated there would be one group of people who have another layer and one who have a direct report structure, which creates animosity. He advocated for two Executive Directors. He stated the City is at a crossroads and needs someone with a strategic mind and someone with a business development plan, stating the City needs someone who will sell Woodstock each day. Opining there are many people on Staff who have the same skill set, Councilman Flynn stated the City lacks a truly creative person. He stated he would prefer the option with three positions authorized with two funded.

Councilman Flynn opined the Finance Department should be in the Operations Department with Human Resources a direct report. He further opined this would allow someone internally to rise to the top.

Councilman Tebo stated the City is not a business, but rather a service organization. He expressed skepticism as to how the advantages noted can be measured, citing synergy as an example. He opined this is already being done between the departments and stated he does not see what Councilman Flynn expressed as a problem. Councilman Tebo stated he does not think the advantages can be clarified. He opined if the Council goes outside for these positions, it is telling the employees they are not eligible, so this decreases upward mobility. He stated Mr. Stelford's number of reports is not critical, opining it depends upon if he can handle them.

Councilman Tebo stated during his time on the Council, he has not seen this as a problem that needs to be fixed. He asked if the City is lacking in strategy or if there is a problem knowing where the City should go, stating if that is the case, what is being proposed may need to be done. He stated he does not have enough information to give his vote now, but needs performance

indicators to determine how things will be measured, noting he needs to see exactly what is going to be done.

Councilman Seegers agreed the City is not a business. He stated the reason businesses are effective is because they are efficient and focused, and put their resources in the very best place. He opined the City can do that and use its assets to be more effective.

Councilman Tebo stated he would love to have a discussion of specifics, noting not all businesses make it. He stated Council cannot lose sight that the City is not a business.

Mayor Turner noted Council spent a fair amount of time in lengthy discussions on June 3rd and 28th reviewing a list of areas it thought the City could do better, such as Economic Development, marketing, the Opera House and its website, the Recreation Department and the pool. He stated when talking about synergy he is talking about taking people that are managing similar functions and putting specialists in these functions in place, similar to what is done in business. He talked about how the Executive Directors would do this opining this would allow the functions to operate more efficiently citing the City's lack of an automation system as an example of something that needs to be accomplished.

Mayor Turner stated a strategic person looks across all levels to look for ways to be better rather than just at his or her own level. He opined there are people with the City that can measure and assess this. He opined these two positions should be from outside the organization because outside ideas are important stating he would also support someone from inside the organization if they can bring new ideas.

Mayor Turner opined the City is at a critical point in its history post-COVID-19 with a new Mayor and new City Council, stating the future belongs to the bold with the potential to reach the next level.

Agreeing the City can improve and noting Mayor Turner's comments had a lot of value, Councilman Tebo stated he needs to be convinced.

At the request of Councilwoman Piersall, Mayor Turner asked for comments from Mr. Stelford. Mr. Stelford wished to assure Council that no matter what model is chosen, Staff has looked for efficiencies and improvements. He stated if Council dedicates additional resources in any area, it will improve the organization, opining it comes down to weighing costs to value. Mr. Stelford stated he is dedicated to make whatever they choose work.

Stating she hears Council saying they wish him to be free to be more strategic, Councilwoman Piersall asked Mr. Stelford if he thinks some of these ideas can help him and what kind of strategy would he have the freedom to implement.

Mr. Stelford stated before he became City Manager, there was an expectation that Department Directors would dedicate time to try and find grants, noting the City struggled in this area as they were focused on many areas. He noted establishing a Grant Writer position and appointing Ms. Willcockson, the City has seen great improvements. He stated more time could be dedicated to focus on a variety of areas, noting the Department Directors need to manage their functions, which does not leave a lot of time. He stated the City is not overstaffed as an organization, noting Staff

has been cut over many years, which has helped control costs, but has put more pressure on remaining Staff.

Mayor Turner stated when talking about functions within the City and how ten different diverse functions are managed, functional management is what goes into his thinking. He talked about the advantage of having an Executive Director whose skill set is in a specific function, such as business development, this could benefit the Opera House and free up Mr. Stelford. He opined this would bring the same skill set to managing the Recreation Center and the Pool. He stated this will free up Mr. Stelford to develop overall strategies, as the City evolves.

In response to a question, Mr. Stelford stated his best talents lie in the finance field. He stated he is also a good manager, developing good ideas and bringing a good team together.

Councilman Seegers opined Mr. Stelford is being modest, noting if Mr. Stelford can manage the people who are managing the areas they are experts in, that would be great. Councilman Seegers stated he is amazed when he talks to Mr. Stelford with what he has to do every day. He stated he supports this proposal to help Mr. Stelford.

Mayor Turner stated one of the things he wishes Mr. Stelford to focus on is expanding the City's boundaries. He opined the proposed structure will help him drive the City for the future. He stated the structure can be changed if it doesn't work.

Councilman Flynn asked Mr. Stelford how much time he has to devote to staff development and coaching staff in areas of improvement rather than talking about things that need to get done. Mr. Stelford acknowledged not as much as he would like, stating the focus is on their mission and what needs to be done. He talked about performance reviews and noted at times he meets with staff members weekly or monthly.

Councilman Flynn opined this is an important step in the creation of a succession plan. He stated the proposal is about letting Mr. Stelford be the leader he can be, but does not have the time to be.

Concerning costs for the original proposal, Mayor Turner stated the report identified how they can be paid for this fiscal year. He stated ongoing funding should not be taken lightly, but noted it is 1.3% of the City's budget, stating his belief there is potential for this. Mayor Turner stated he views this as an investment that should pay dividends in how this affects the organization of the City. Noting if funding is a concern, the City has a bridge, which is the federal funds that are coming.

Mayor Turner stated the question comes down to an opportunity that exists to improve the things we already talked about to evolve the organization, noting each Council member has the responsibility to decide this for him or herself. He stated he would like to see Council be bold in the opportunities presented to them, which is why he believes in the potential of a new structure to realize the creativity of Staff to respond, create and execute. He opined the potential of the City is there.

Councilman Seegers stated he would like to get the Opera House where it did not have to be subsidized, with Councilman Tebo opining this will be difficult.

Mayor Turner opined this has never been about effort, expressing his belief everyone on Staff puts forth great effort and his faith in the commitment of Staff. He stated the question is whether the environment Staff operates in can be managed in a way that elevates performance, opining this proposal can accomplish this. Mayor Turner stated he sees potential for great developmental growth for the directors and the functions they oversee.

Mayor Turner opined Option 3 should not be considered, stating he understands the caution surrounding Options 1 and 2. He opined the model works and will bring results. He urged Council to be bold. He stated he favors Option 1, if the Council wants to be bold and creative.

Councilwoman Piersall stated she does not disagree and sees value in the proposal and doing it now as the City comes out of COVID-19. She stated she wants to be mindful of the stress this puts on Mr. Stelford and City Staff, noting she wants them to be part of the equation.

Councilwoman Piersall wished to say how much she values Mr. Stelford and the Staff, stating it is clear this is not about that they are not doing enough. She opined it is about what Council can do to make everyone shine more.

Mayor Turner agreed, stating this is not about failure or lack of performance, but rather about the potential to go up another level.

Councilman Nierman stated perhaps some of the department directors need to step it up.

Mayor Turner countered this suggestion is not practical, stating some new level of structure is what is trying to be achieved. He opined the ideas, creativity, and potential ideas generated from this structure are substantially greater than the current structure, which is what matters.

Councilman Flynn opined everyone has good ideas, but no one has the time as they are working on things all the time, with no time to be creative or innovative. He stated the City needs to be ready for the next opportunity. Stating the money can be found, he opined the proposal will drive things that bring in more money. He stated he would like other communities to come to the City for ideas, rather than the City going to them.

In response to a question from Councilman Tebo as to whether other communities call the City to model what Woodstock is doing, Mr. Stelford stated the City gets calls regularly from other communities seeking information and advice. He stated Woodstock is a leader in McHenry County, talking about some of the things that Woodstock has been looked to from other communities. Councilman Tebo stated he has been with Mr. Stelford when he received calls from other communities in the County and even the State, seeking his ideas and opinions. Mr. Stelford opined if he can help Woodstock's neighbors be successful that helps the region, which benefits Woodstock.

Mayor Turner stated Mr. Stelford has provided great leadership, citing some examples including the Utility Consortium he developed and facilitated for the communities in McHenry County, which benefitted all. Mayor Turner opined Mr. Stelford could do more of that with a structure that does not spread him so thin.

Mayor Turner asked the Councilmembers 1) Do they believe the City should make this

organizational change? 2) If yes, which model do they believe Staff should explore further?

Councilman Seegers expressed support of the organizational change. Stating he is struggling between Option 1 and 2, he opined time is the current Staff's problem. He stated he is blown away when he talks to Mr. Stelford about big picture changes.

Councilman Nierman expressed support for the organizational change, stating he is unsure of which model should be explored.

Councilwoman Piersall expressed support for the organizational change, stating she is not sure about which model should be explored, expressing support for the original model.

Councilman Flynn expressed support for the organizational change and the original model, with three Executive Director positions, two of which are funded this year with one later.

Councilwoman Lohmeyer expressed support for the organizational change. She stated he wished to eliminate Option 3 and is back and forth between the original model and Option 1.

Mayor Turner expressed support for the organizational change. He noted three Councilmembers have identified Option 1 as their preference with three stating they are not entirely sure, but prefer either Option 1 or Option 2. He stated he is leaning toward the original proposal.

Mayor Turner asked how Council wishes to proceed next, stating he wishes to move quickly if that is the wish and not be involved in a perpetual discussion.

Councilman Seegers expressed his support of the Original proposal with the commitment from Council with input from Staff to review and make changes, if it is seen not to be working. He also talked about how he believes the job descriptions should be revised. Mayor Turner expressed his commitment.

Mayor Turner stated there is a consensus of support for the organization change and the original option, and directed Staff to develop items for action and implementation subject to their time.

He emphasized to Mr. Stelford and City Staff that this is about working to improve the City and maximize potential and is not a judgement of Staff. He stated each employee has a role in this and that continues.

Mayor Turner asked for Public Comment on this item.

Andrew Celentano, Transportation Commission Chairman, talked about his experience with similar actions when he was a manager on Wall Street with many people reporting to him. He urged Council to get the thoughts of the employees on this action. Noting he has worked with Staff for 10 years as Transportation Commission Chairman, Mr. Celentano opined they are really smart and asked Council to challenge Staff. He stated if these positions are filled from the outside, Council will take away the possibility of two of the City's directors becoming Executive Directors. He urged Council to exhaust its possibilities before making a final decision.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

In response to a request from Councilwoman Piersall, Mayor Turner stated the Property Management Program would be placed on the agenda for the 2nd meeting in September, if possible. He noted a report on the Old Courthouse Project will be placed on the August 17th agenda.

There are no further additions, deletions, or corrections to the tentative future agendas.

ADJOURN

Motion by D. Flynn, second by L. Lohmeyer, to adjourn this regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council to the next regular meeting on Tuesday, August 17, 2021, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall. Ayes: D. Flynn, L. Lohmeyer, T. Nierman, W. Piersall, B. Seegers, G. Tebo, and Mayor M. Turner. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley
City Clerk